



Pacific Northwest Region
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
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News Release

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Forest Service releases Final Record of Decision for Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project

BAKER CITY, Ore. – Wallowa-Whitman Forest Supervisor Tom Montoya signed a Final Record of Decision (ROD) authorizing implementation of the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project on Friday, March 17.

“The thoughtful feedback we received by all participants in this project really helped shape a decision that will allow positive progress across the landscape, resulting in a healthier condition,” said Tom Montoya, Forest Supervisor.

The long term goal of the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project is to increase forest resiliency and reduce the risks of uncharacteristic wildfire. The decision will implement Alternative 2 of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) with modifications. Project activities include a combination of commercial harvest, small tree thinning, manual and mechanical fuels treatments across more than 16,900 acres of the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration project area. Prescribed fire treatments will be applied on up to approximately 90,000 acres over the next decade, as conditions allow. In addition, the decision makes minor changes to open road densities within the project area by opening approximately 23 miles of road to provide public access and closing approximately 12 miles of road to address resource concerns. All changes in road densities are consistent with the Wallowa-Whitman Forest Plan.

The complete Final Environmental Impact Statement, Records of Decision, maps, data tables and comment responses are available online at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/wallowa-whitman/landmanagement/projects/LJCRP>.

The Lower Joseph Creek Restoration project area is located 20 miles north of Enterprise on the Wallowa Valley Ranger District of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The



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98,000 acre project originated from a collaborative watershed assessment completed by the Wallowa County Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC) and external stakeholders. The Blue Mountains Restoration Strategy Team, whose primary focus was to assist the Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region in addressing larger restoration efforts, began the project analysis in 2013. The project is part of the Forest Service's broader strategy to accelerate the pace and scale of forest restoration in eastern Oregon and Washington to provide both healthy forests and healthy communities. More information can be found on the Eastside Restoration website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/EastsideRestoration> or by contacting Darcy Weseman (541-278-3755, deweseman@fs.fed.us).

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